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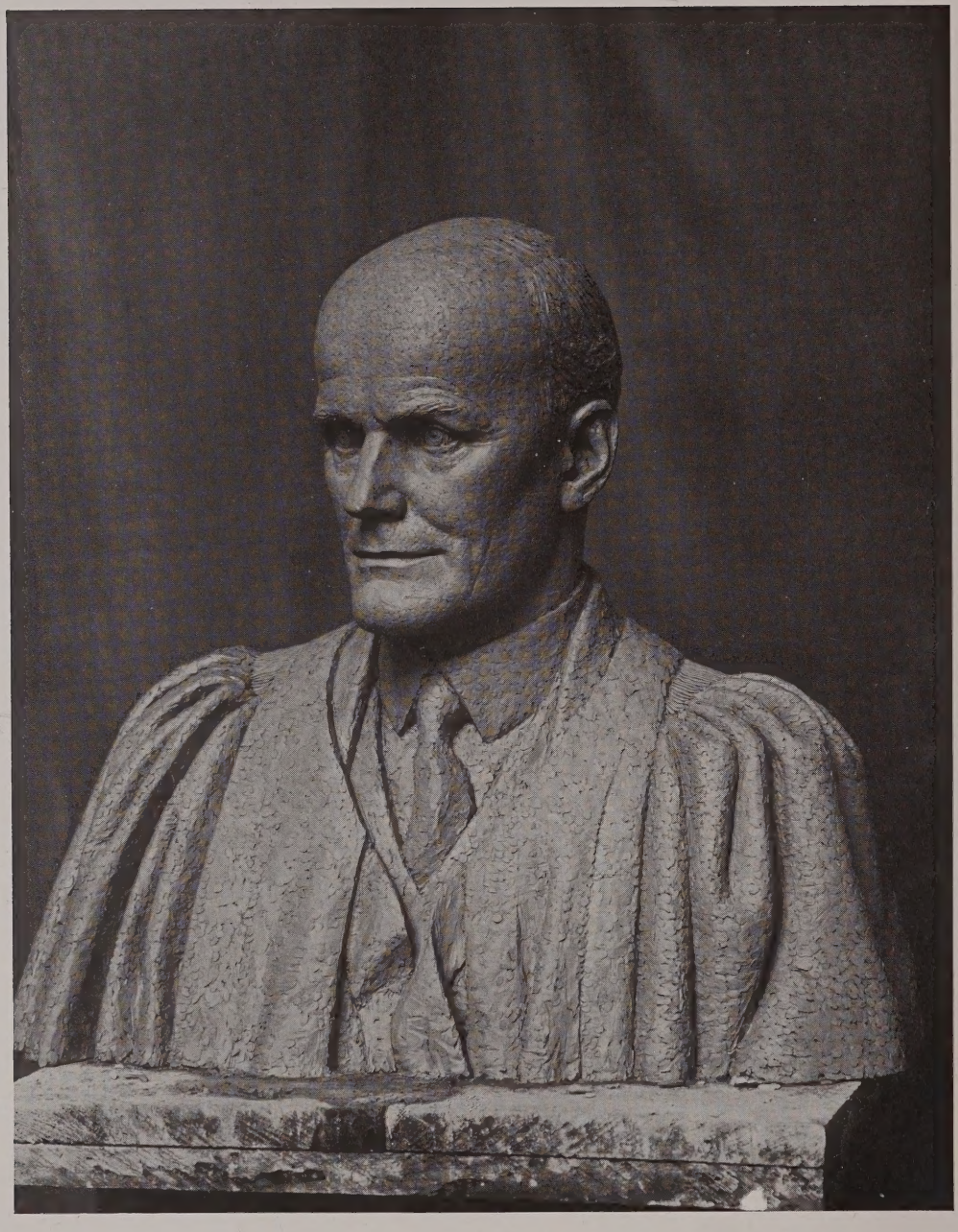
MEMORIAL
TO THE LATE SIR
WALTER MORLEY FLETCHER



MEMORIAL
TO THE LATE SIR
WALTER MORLEY FLETCHER

K.B.E., C.B., M.D., Sc.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.

(1873–1933)

SECRETARY OF THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE
AND COUNCIL, 1914–1933

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MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
23 JUNE 1933

The Medical Research Council desire to convey to the family of the late Sir Walter Fletcher an expression of deep sympathy with them in their bereavement.

Walter Fletcher brought to the service of the Council a unique assemblage of gifts. He had had a highly distinguished career in experimental research; he was an influential teacher of science; he possessed a culture in which scientific and humane studies were well and fruitfully balanced; and he was a master of practical affairs. Even this equipment would, however, hardly have given to his management of the work of the Council its extraordinary success if it had not been animated by one of the most vigorous spirits of his time. He was always and even painfully aware of the suffering and disorder of mankind and profoundly convinced that their root lay in ignorance. The zeal and the unmistakable honesty with which he held this conviction were the foundation of his singular power.

His deference for conscientious work, his understanding of the difficulties peculiar to original research, his eye for ability of all kinds, and his immense knowledge of the medical sciences, made him a perfect intermediary between the Council and its workers, and the inspiring helper of both.

The gifts and character which were so influential in determining the policy of the Council in its early days, and which imparted so strong a momentum to the work of its maturity, will find in the continuing progress of that policy and that work their best and most lasting memorial.

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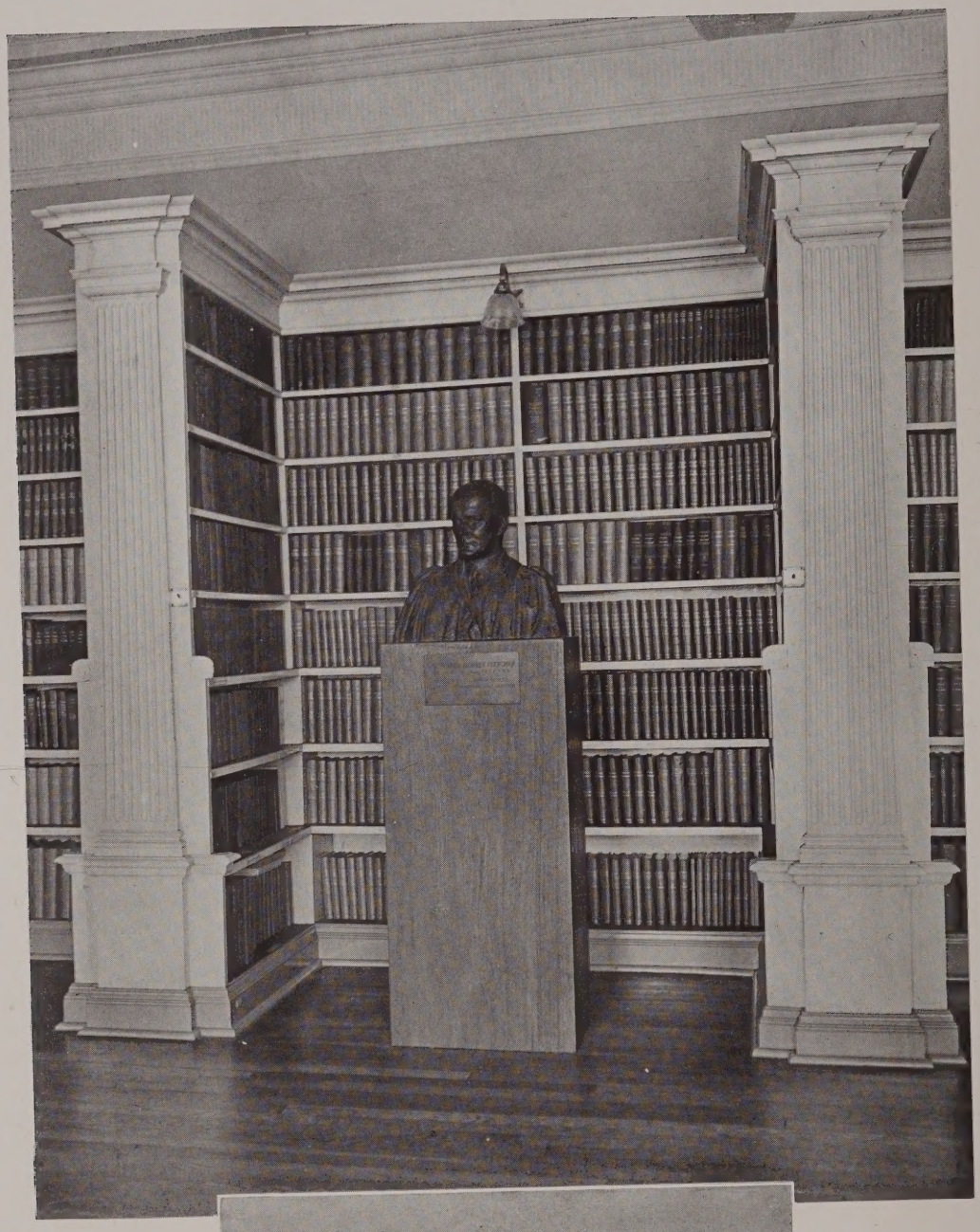

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MEMORIAL TO THE LATE SIR WALTER MORLEY FLETCHER

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SECRETARY OF THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

ON the afternoon of the 11th November, 1936, the subscribers to the Memorial Fund were invited by the Medical Research Council to view Miss Dora Clarke's posthumous portrait-bust of the late Sir Walter Morley Fletcher, Secretary of the Council (formerly Committee) from 1914 to 1933 and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. The ceremony was held at the National Institute for Medical Research, Hampstead, in the library of which the bust is to be permanently placed.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Chairman of the Council, presided. He said that it was a high privilege to preside over a gathering of friends of Walter Fletcher, and it was a special pleasure that this should be almost the first duty which had fallen to him in his new office. All Fletcher's friends would remember the enthusiasm with which he would talk of his work as Secretary of the Council; he was able to make his 'shop' interesting even to the layman. Lord Balfour thought that the date for their gathering, the great national day of remembrance, had been well chosen, and that here was the right place for a memorial to the man who had done so much to make the work of the Medical Research Council a force in the land.

He intimated that the total amount contributed to the Memorial Fund by over five hundred separate subscribers was about £2,300. The remainder, after meeting the cost of the personal memorial, was to be used for a Walter Fletcher Memorial Laboratory. This was to be constructed at the Farm Laboratories of the National Institute at Mill Hill; and it was intended for research work in nutrition, which Sir Walter Fletcher had regarded as a factor of prime importance in human well-being.

Addresses were then given by Professor G. M. Trevelyan, O.M., and Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, O.M., F.R.S. These are printed in full in the following pages.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Trustees of the Memorial Fund, then asked the Director of the National Institute to accept the custody of the bust. Sir Henry Dale replied that he was proud to accept the care of the bust on behalf of his colleagues and of all who worked in the Institute. They could never forget what they owed to Walter Fletcher, or his generous pride in their work. They would keep this fine portrait of him in all honour in their library, where it would daily remind them of what he had meant to the Institute in its early years, and would transmit to those who came after them a hint of his inspiring personality.

The accompanying illustrations show (1) Miss Dora Clarke's posthumous portrait bust of Sir Walter Fletcher, photographed from the clay model; and (2) a corner of the Library at the National Institute for Medical Research, with the finished bronze in position—inset, a close view of the inscription.

ADDRESS BY
PROFESSOR G. M. TREVELYAN, O.M.

WE are met to-day—not unsuitably the day of national commemoration of the good and true, to honour the memory of Sir Walter Fletcher. We are gathered before Miss Dora Clarke's sculpture, which recalls to us very vividly the features of the friend we have lost. We are met to record our gratitude for what Walter Fletcher did, and our affectionate remembrance of what he was.

To us who were his friends his place can never be filled, for he was not made according to any pattern. He has set his individual impression on each of us who knew him well. The more general mark that he made on the world at large he made most of all as the guiding spirit of the Medical Research Committee—afterwards Council—in its formative period. Of that work I am not competent to speak, and still less of his own research work. But these matters have already been admirably treated by Professor T. R. Elliott in the obituary notice published by the Royal Society—and will be treated again to-day by the high authority of Sir Frederick Hopkins.

I can only speak of what I knew of my friend. But from what I knew personally of his character, his mind, and his contacts with men, I think I can see why he was so well fitted to be a *liaison* officer between the scientific world and the world of public life and administration.

He was heart and soul a Cambridge man and a man of science—the two things go easily together. His devotion to the patient pursuit of the truth of any matter was an instinct so strong in him that early in life he chose the path of the researcher rather than that of practising surgeon, although he used often to say to me that he thought he had qualities that would have led him to success in the operating theatre, and he thought the surgeon's a high and enviable calling.

And yet, for all that, he was something more than a Cambridge man, and something more than a man of science and research. His love of life on all its sides—athletic, artistic, literary, social, his deep interest in the public welfare and his desire to make science subserve it—these things together gave him a largeness of mind and heart that is not specially a Cambridge trait. It is a gift of God.

To employ an American phrase—the characteristic merit of Cambridge men is that they 'sit still and saw wood'. But they are not perhaps very apt to look outside the wood-shed. Now Walter Fletcher sawed wood, but his young affections were always out of doors, both literally and metaphorically. To the end of his life his eager, ranging mind was out of doors—in the streets, in the fields, on the moors, and circling the Empire and the world.

Some of the men who have done most for Cambridge, like Hugh Anderson of Caius, highly valued this quality in Fletcher, and co-operated with him in forming stronger links

between Cambridge and the outer world, greatly to the advantage both of the world and of Cambridge.

I always think of those two friends together, different as they were in some aspects of character. To be with either of them always made me feel ashamed of my limitations. I knew nothing of science. But they knew and cared so much about the humane studies. They were generous and ardent in their appreciation of any sort of good work that was being done in any line of study and endeavour, and so eager to lay plans to help it. They were a wonderful complement, one to the other. Anderson utterly selfless and hampered by excess of modesty; Fletcher bringing his natural high spirits and cheery self-confidence to the support of every good project.

To go back in time, back more than forty years from now, I remember well my first impression of Walter Fletcher when I was an undergraduate at Trinity in the early nineties. I was then absorbed in what was called an 'intellectual' set. We were by no means 'decadent', but we were, as I now think, intellectual in rather too narrow a way; and I remember well, although I did not then know Walter Fletcher intimately, as I was privileged to do in later years, it was my occasional contacts with him in those old undergraduate days that first gave me an idea how life might be enlarged into something more jolly, more human, more all-embracing, in every sense more out-of-doors, but not for that less inspired and guided by intellect. He had interests I knew nothing about—I do not mean merely his science—but his hurdling exploits at Fenners',

his relish of social life at the Pitt Club and in many different sets of men, his antiquarianism and friendship with Monty James. I was flattered that such a man, with so full and varied a life, should at all desire my company, but I soon found out that he cared for what I cared for—the best things in poetry, literature, history, and my favourite diversion of cross-country walking. He brought to their appreciation the natural ardour of his spirit. He seemed to skim off for himself the best in me and my interests, and he possessed so much more besides which was out of my reach.

Of course he had his faults, and what faults a man has are usually obvious to others in proportion to his active merits. Faults of omission and negation and refusal were *not* his, and those are the faults that pass with the least censure in the cloistered life of Cambridge. But in whatever company Walter Fletcher was, he counted. He always spoke his mind.

It was his merit, and sometimes his difficulty, that he combined the Puritan and the Cavalier ideal. He had been brought up in the best English Puritan tradition, one of a large family, in the home of a nonconformist man of science and affairs. And Walter Fletcher never ceased to say 'That is right', 'That is wrong', sometimes with the stutter of eagerness we remember so well. He was always faithful to the rock from which he was hewn, and he was not afraid of passing moral judgements.

But on the top of this Puritan bedrock he superadded all that is innocent and delightful in what we may call the Cavalier

enjoyment of life. He was impatient of people who missed their opportunities of enjoying whatever was worth seeing, doing, reading, hearing.

Life was to him both a high call to duty and service, and a joyful opportunity for the most varied forms of experience and happiness. This character and this combination of qualities made him an ideal tutor of Trinity from 1905 to 1914. A better influence on young men it would be hard to imagine. How he loved Trinity—how proud he was of its antiquities, its ancient beauty, its historic personalities, and its performance down the ages. And during that Tutorship period his research work was going on alongside, with its strict discipline of the mind, and its achievement.

This same combination of the disciplined character with the eager love of life and all its gifts, made him particularly at home in the circle into which he married—the Ellergreen circle of the Croppers of Westmorland. His father-in-law, Charles Cropper, and his uncle by marriage, Sydney, Lord Knutsford, both had, like Walter himself, a genius for enjoying life on all its sides and making others enjoy it too. Now this quality and gift is specially admirable in men who, like those three, shoulder their full share of the world's work.

And it is to be noted that Fletcher brought to his extraneous pleasures and interests the discipline and power of his mind. Everywhere he wanted to bring accurate information to bear. He could talk about prints, he could talk about wines, with a wealth of knowledge that astonished the knowledgeable in

those mysteries. He was such an antiquarian and lover of architecture that he was the constant companion of Monty James himself in his exploring tours at home and abroad. And Fletcher's favourite sport of deerstalking was a discipline and a science, with all the poetry of great mountain spaces added.

The passage of the years makes most of us deteriorate either in body or in mind, or in both, and especially does administrative life in London bear hardly on most men as they near sixty. But Fletcher's keen mind and splendid body were always in training to the end. How alert, how young, were his movements and bearing, how unbent that tall back, how quick the flash and humour of his eye!

What a friend he was! To be with him for an hour was a thing I looked forward to for weeks beforehand. His presence was a tonic, his talk dispelled dullness and discouragement like mists before the lifting wind. How heartily he rejoiced in our successes, and how frankly he called on us to rejoice in his own; and therefore no personal events gave more general happiness than the Cambridge success of his son Charles, at Trinity, in medical scholarship and on the river. For we all thought at once 'How it will please Walter!' He had taught us to think like that.

Yes, what a friend he was! And yet he had in perfection the blessing of ties stronger even than those of friendship.

Of his work I must leave Sir Frederick Hopkins to speak. But I know from Fletcher's talks to me what was the spirit in which he set about that work. His Secretaryship of the

Medical Research Council seemed to him the chance of a lifetime. To bring together science and public administration for the good of the people of England, of India, of the Empire, and of humanity at large—that was the ideal that inspired him. All his life, since first he could distinguish, he had felt deeply and talked indignantly of the waste of human material and happiness through lay ignorance and through the State's neglect of research and science.

That Oxford should supply the politicians and Cambridge the men of science, and that there should be a wall of mutual ignorance between them, was an evil on which he used often to descant. So he rejoiced to serve in this cause under Arthur Balfour, the Cambridge politician, who understood the issue as he did. But his great co-operator in the Civil Service had been an Oxford man—Sir Robert Morant, a man after his own heart.

Fletcher believed in our free and popular form of government—he was essentially a Liberal in mind—but he well knew one of the besetting sins of our English democratic Government—its want of reverence for scientific knowledge as a guide to public action. He rejoiced, therefore, when the Government at last consented to endow research through the Medical Research Committee. It might be the beginning of a new epoch, for it was his doctrine that every branch of statecraft required a fuller use of biological science to raise our C3 nation to health of body and mind—a problem we are only now beginning to tackle.

He was anxious to prevent the Medical Research Committee, or Council, from becoming a mere Department of State like any other in Whitehall. Its spirit was to be scientific, not at all political, and not merely administrative. It was to keep the Government of the country in constant touch with the Royal Society and with the best scientific minds. How far he succeeded others know better than I. But that, I know, was what he aimed at, with all the resources of his zeal, his wit, and his persuasive energy.

You have listened very patiently to the words of one whose ignorance of medical science and of all other branches of science is profound. Who, indeed, am I that I should speak here? But my reverence for the science of medicine, and my desire that it should inspire the action of the State are as great as any man's here. How could it be otherwise, since I, too, was a friend of Walter Fletcher's.

ADDRESS BY
SIR FREDERICK GOWLAND HOPKINS
O.M., F.R.S.

WHEN in 1898, on the invitation of Sir Michael Foster, I first went to Cambridge to develop and teach there the chemical side of physiology, I had read a striking paper, published earlier in the same year, on the respiration of surviving amphibian muscle. The paper greatly impressed me and I much looked forward to meeting its author, Walter Fletcher of Trinity, who, I felt sure, must possess remarkable qualities as an investigator. He had carried out the work described in the paper while holding the Coutts Trotter Research Studentship. Some earlier work devoted to tracing the course of certain autonomic nerve fibres had already proved him to be an able experimentalist, but this was probably undertaken on the suggestion of a senior wishing to test the young investigator's perseverance and skill. On a quite different plane was the later work on muscle, in which Fletcher's own innate gifts came to light. It showed originality in its conception, involved the skilful use of admirable technique, and yielded results of outstanding interest. These results indeed illuminated a fundamental question in biology: What are the time relations between biological oxidations and those active, visible manifestations of life for which those oxidations supply energy? Fletcher's study disproved an obscurantist theory concerning these relations which had long been inhibitory both to thought

and to experimental endeavour. The results he published, now nearly forty years ago, greatly encouraged at that time those who had faith that chemical methods could be profitably applied to a study of active events in living tissues. Their influence is still to be felt.

It happened, however, that I was to see almost nothing of Fletcher during my first year at Cambridge. He was then much in London completing his clinical studies, and could make but rare visits to the laboratory. In 1900, however, having qualified medically, he became Lecturer in Natural Science at Trinity College, of which he was already a Fellow, and opportunities for meeting him became more frequent. I soon felt the spell of his very exceptional and magnetic personality, and, having learned the nature of his special interests, I will confess to cherishing for a little while the hope that he might be tempted permanently into the path of biochemical research. I soon realized, however, that his almost passionate interest in every kind of human activity could never have allowed him to be completely happy in the narrows of specialism. In any case, increasing commitments in college even then left him small leisure for laboratory research, but he made good use of what he had, and in 1903 he published a valuable paper on the osmotic properties of muscle, showing his maintained interest in the subject of his early choice.

In 1907 it was my privilege to join Fletcher in a research meant to follow up suggestions contained in his first paper, which had become classical. He had by then for some years

been Tutor at his College, and his hours were filled by the exacting duties of this post, to which he gave of his best, together with the many human contacts which were essential to his happiness and in which he often gained and always gave so much of value, and with enterprises which he felt had a claim on his help. Time for research could be found only by heroic efforts, which, however, were always made.

The results of our conjoint work published in 1907 gave precision, previously quite lacking, to knowledge of the longest known and, from a superficial aspect, the most familiar chemical event associated with physiological changes in muscle, namely the appearance and disappearance of lactic acid. I may venture to say of this research, because it has often been generously said by others, that, by still further strengthening a faith in the value of chemical studies as applied to tissue dynamics, it encouraged the subsequent remarkable output of work in that field. In the case of muscle, in particular, the labours of many have revealed a complexity in the events associated with activity which was wholly unsuspected when Fletcher and I published our paper.

In 1913 appeared yet another paper, by Fletcher himself, on acid production in mammalian muscle. This tissue offers experimental difficulties much greater than those found with amphibian muscle, and the successful work called for much experimental ingenuity.

The close contact I had with him from time to time during those years assured me—and I am still assured—that if his

subsequent career had been that of an experimental investigator he would have reached very high eminence in that field. I have already expressed a doubt whether such a career would have given him all that he by nature craved.

But in the year of his last-mentioned publication, 1913, fate was preparing for him an opportunity for services to science which, though indirect, were to be not less, but greater, than any individual investigator could hope to render.

You will not wish me to deal with the history of the Medical Research Committee while in embryo. You will remember that, as a new departure in legislation, a Research Fund was created under the National Insurance Act, though, to say the truth, not at first from a disinterested desire to encourage the advance of medical knowledge in general. It was meant, when first proposed, to support research in tuberculosis only, because under the new Act the ravages of that disease were expected to be especially costly to the taxpayer. But fortunately for the country the wisdom of a few made itself felt in Government circles. It was decided that the application of the Fund should cover the widest possible field of medical research and that its administration should be controlled by a properly constituted committee.

For this policy the thanks of Medicine became due chiefly, I think, to Lord Astor, Dr. Christopher Addison, and the distinguished civil servant Sir Robert Morant. The two former were among the original members of the Committee, which was duly constituted in 1913.

At first, and for some time, the Committee met in circumstances which, though most pleasant, were not greatly conducive to immediate progress in policy. It assembled at the house of its first Chairman, Lord Moulton, and its discussions were post-prandial, following upon enjoyment of the magnificent hospitality of its host. The appointment of an official Secretary was rather long postponed. Most of its members, however, soon became acutely aware that the success of the Committee's work must infallibly depend on the acquisition of a whole-time administrative officer, and some at least realized that he should possess qualifications that are special and rare. An ideal appointment seemed at first, and for some time, to be almost impossible of achievement. Looking back on those weeks during which the appointment was in suspense, I feel that the future of medical research in this country was then facing a critical moment.

The real needs of a committee, new in kind and intention, were not understood by all those concerned. Viewing the duties of the office as though it were to be purely and conventionally secretarial, the acquisition of a trained civil servant was proposed by some: later, individuals were considered who, while possessed of certain relevant qualifications, had little or no acquaintance with the spirit and needs of scientific research. It was even suggested, I remember, that the office might be a part-time one! For some at least among the Committee these were days of real and grave discomfort.

At last came the happy solution.

I would fain persuade myself that as a member of the Committee I was the first to think of the possibility of Walter Fletcher's acceptance of the post, but credit should be given where it is due. I realize that for me the hint of this possibility first came from T. R. Elliott, who thus began his great services to the Committee, which he renewed when later he became one of its members and in various capacities continued. It was, however, my privilege to discover that Fletcher would seriously consider the appointment, and to bring Lord Moulton and him together. The result of an interview arranged at my house was conclusive. The decision was for Fletcher no easy one, but it was made, and at the next meeting of the Committee its Chairman convinced the members that all difficulties were at an end. In July 1914 Fletcher duly entered on the duties of administrative secretary.

That the right man had been chosen became at once clear. The rapidity with which Fletcher gripped the whole situation was remarkable. Sound policies for the committee were quickly suggested, approved, and made ready for application. Then and there this country for the first time in its history began to play a proper and adequate part in the advancement of medicine by scientific research.

The advent of the Great War so soon after its activities had begun, and within a month of its gaining its Secretary, seemed likely to be as tragic for the future of the Medical Research Committee as it was for so much else. That the issue for the Committee and for medical research was in fact so different

was due in greatest measure to Fletcher's vision, wisdom, and untiring energy. To claim this is not to undervalue the services of individual members of the Committee, including, of course, those of the political members. But during the war years they could meet but seldom; each member had his own individual task to perform elsewhere. The war, indeed, greatly increased the direct responsibilities of the Secretary. He alone, remaining at the centre of things, could visualize all that might be done in many fields of activity and therefore ought to be done promptly. It required Fletcher's knowledge and judgement to secure that elaborate organization of effort which alone could make real and effective the help to be rendered. His success was again rapid; indeed I think it partook of the marvellous. At first he met widely, as might have been expected, an official attitude expressed in such phrases as, 'Let us get on with the war; research must wait', but after a surprisingly short time that attitude was everywhere completely changed. The help of scientific research for the solution of many problems, some of them new and unexpected, was soon accepted and asked for. Thenceforward it was eagerly sought throughout the war.

The working of Fletcher's mind at this time and the sure and effective development of his policy can be adequately followed by reading the introductions to successive annual reports of the Committee. These introductions were, of course, reviewed by the committee and were officially signed by the Chairman, but the words were Fletcher's own. We learn from

them that he grasped from the first where and how the Committee's resources could best serve the national needs, while his tact and perseverance secured their rapid and right application. He doubtless received ready and untiring help from a great number of willing workers, and in 1917 he wrote of the growth and success of the method of promoting and co-ordinating inquiries by the regular meetings in conference of workers actually engaged in researches upon various parts of the same subject. He arranged and made admirable use of these conferences. He soon saw that any distinction between military or other opportunist schemes of inquiry and those framed under the less urgent stimulus of peace was of little significance, and realized the permanent value which may spring from the study of problems emerging, as in war time, from unusual and temporary conditions. He saw to it, therefore, that while every acquisition in knowledge made possible by these exceptional conditions should be immediately available for current service, it should also be fully recorded for the services of the future. The issue of those technical reports which formed part of his original scheme for the activities of the Committee was carried on during the war. They were of immediate, and, no less, of permanent value; like their numerous successors, they are prized in medical centres everywhere. It should be recalled here that it was not by the endowment and organization of research alone that the resources of the committee were mobilized for war services. I need only mention in illustration of this the active assistance given in the

collection and classification of the Army Medical Statistics, a task which grew to immense dimensions and to which the Secretary devoted much thought and labour.

I must not, of course, attempt to enumerate here the remarkable advances in medical knowledge made during the war, so many of them capable of immediate application, to which the resources of the Medical Research Committee contributed during those days of stress. Any attempt to do so could give but a very incomplete picture of the real accomplishment. It is sure that the Committee emerged from the war with its reputation established and its future secure. None can dispute that it was a happy circumstance for the country and for its sons in the trenches that a body capable of supporting medical research on a national scale came into being before the war began, and that a man possessed of full understanding of the nature and needs of research, together with faith, vision, tact, and humanity, was devoted to its service.

With the war's end there came no respite for the Committee's Secretary. The transition to peace conditions called for much reorganization of effort, while the fall in the value of money reduced the effectiveness of the fund to be administered. This for a short time was a source of embarrassment.

Soon, however, came that change of status, greatly advantageous, but involving adjustments which again made heavy demands on Fletcher's thought, time, and energy. This change in the constitutional position of the Committee was associated with, and partly consequent upon, the passage of the Ministry

of Health Act in 1919. Admirable was the policy of those who at this time saved the Committee from being departmentalized. They secured for it a Charter and the status of a Council responsible only to a committee of the Privy Council. The Secretary of the former became *ex officio* also Secretary of the latter. Financial support for the Council's work now came directly from a parliamentary vote, and the Lord President of the Council became its responsible minister. The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, with its Advisory Council, had been established upon a similar satisfactory basis a little before, and recently the third of the bodies entrusted with public monies for the support of research, namely the Agricultural Research Council, has with certain modifications received the same status.

There was great wisdom in the relations thus established. They protected the research organizations from political influences, brought them together, and gave them freedom for immediate or rapid action whenever there might be a call for this. The initiation of this policy was, I believe, largely due to the influence of Sir Robert Morant, but its development was carefully fostered by Walter Fletcher, who profoundly believed in its wisdom.

There was no breach between the activities of the original Committee and those of the new Council. The respect won by the former was inherited by the latter, and the work begun so well during the war was continued in happier and more fortunate circumstances. As the years went on, the Council

and its Secretary gained increasing influence, increasing respect, and increasing trust. Few indeed among national enterprises have ever gained more praise, or, I think, suffered less from criticism.

While our thoughts are turned to its devoted Secretary we do not forget—Fletcher would not have had us forget—the debt that the country owes to successive members of the Council he served; distinguished men, and busy men all. Experts have devoted time and thought to its work, while political members and eminent Chairmen and Treasurers, burdened with other duties of high importance, have given it the benefit of their knowledge of affairs. Yet no one who served on the Council with Walter Fletcher will ever under-estimate the weight of his influence or doubt the sustained wisdom of his policies. These were always loyally submitted to the judgement of his Council, and he gave to it always the credit due to their success.

He served Committee and Council for twenty strenuous years. Some day, we may hope, the epic story of those years will be adequately told. Throughout them all Fletcher saw to it that at no centre where medical research was in progress, or could be advantageously initiated, should the Council fail to give all the assistance in its power.

He always believed that the term 'medical research' should be given a wide significance, looking upon it as a truism that medicine cannot fail to benefit from the progress of disinterested research in the ancillary sciences. Many a worker

in this country has been cheered by, and justly benefited from, that faith of his. But Fletcher also believed wholeheartedly in the importance of clinical research, and nothing, I think, gave him greater satisfaction than the ability of his Council to free distinguished clinicians from the demands of practice and teaching, and enable them to conduct and supervise researches in the wards.

Very near to his heart were the interests of the National Institute in which we are to-day assembled, and he felt great pride—which we should all share—in the highly important gains to knowledge which have arisen from the devoted and brilliant labours of its staff. The Institute has been a home of the team spirit in research. This spirit calls for self-forgetfulness, but here it has been abundantly justified in its results. I can think of nothing which would have given Fletcher more unalloyed pleasure were he with us to-day than to know that his trusted colleague, the Director of the Institute, is now with such abundant justification a Nobel Laureate.

I must finally refer in briefest fashion to the large amount of beneficent work which Fletcher accomplished apart from, or but indirectly connected with, his labours as the Council Secretary. In illustration we may think of his journey to India for the purpose of organizing medical research there. He paid indeed a penalty (though I do not think he thought it to be such) for the high reputation and trust he had earned in official and other influential quarters. His help and advice were sought in connexion with innumerable enterprises and constant de-

mands were thus made upon his time. Let me remind you also that, just because his judgement was so trusted, not a few institutions reaped great benefits from his influence. On his advice, for instance, biochemistry at Cambridge received magnificent endowments from the Trustees of the late Sir William Dunn, and to balance this he led the same Trustees to provide handsomely for pathology at Oxford; and then, to reach complete symmetry in these enterprises at the old Universities, he was able to persuade the Rockefeller Foundation nobly to endow biochemistry at Oxford and pathology at Cambridge. These instances were outstanding, but they were far indeed from being the only ones in which his directive influence brought benefits to institutions and individuals alike.

To catalogue the successes of a career is easy. To account for them is sometimes more difficult. Circumstances may count for as much as the man; occasionally even for more!

In the case of Walter Fletcher circumstances gave him, it is true, a great opportunity; but his rich successes were assuredly due to qualities innate in the man himself. Not alone, however, to those qualities on which I have dwelt—those of the investigator, of the administrator, the devotee to duty. They were due no less, and, I think, on occasions even more, to those human qualities which Professor Trevelyan has recalled so finely.

The environment in which Fletcher worked was complex. He had need to be at home in each of many circles—political, official, intellectual, and social. In all of these he was welcome,

and from all or from most he gained sympathy for the objects he had at heart. 'Wisdom', Alfred North Whitehead has said, 'is the fruit of a balanced development'; of the balanced growth of individuality. It is the fate of most of us to become specialists, to cultivate what the same author has called 'intellectual professionalism'. But Fletcher, because of his very nature, escaped from this. From youth onwards he remained keenly interested in almost every worthy pursuit of his fellow men, and magically seemed to find time to enjoy whatever is valuable in each one. It was this balance in his nature and his many genuine enthusiasms which made him so attractive, but also so exactly fitted for the exceptional duties which fell to him. In sum, he was a great man and a great public servant. It is fitting that posterity should learn that his own generation recognized and valued his services.

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